

27th ICOM General Conference 2025

Appendix 5

Extract of the ICOM Graphic Chart



Introduction: Where ICOM stands

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is the international organisation of museums and museum professionals with a worldwide reach through its members, its active National and International Specialist Committees, Regional Alliances and Affiliated Organisations, and its work with intergovernmental agencies.

“**Section 1. Mission.** ICOM is the international organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

Section 2. Purpose. ICOM establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities, makes recommendations on issues related thereto, promotes capacity building, advances knowledge and raises public cultural awareness through global networks and co-operation programmes.”

Source: ICOM statutes, 2016

ICOM Values

Independence ICOM is an independent worldwide membership organisation comprised of individual and institutional members. Its membership has been steadily growing. It is structured into National Committees and International Committees, Regional Alliances and in its wider family, Affiliated Organisations. ICOM is organised on democratic principles and conducts its business in a transparent manner. ICOM is a non-governmental body (NGO), which has formal relations with governments, intergovernmental bodies and agencies. It works internationally and independently of governments and has no biased political, financial or other interests. Its independence is a fundamental principle and value. It is ICOM's most valuable asset. ICOM independently advocates for the heritage of humanity and in particular for museums and museum work with knowledge, boldness and conviction. Its members, staff and affiliates work solely for the benefit of that heritage, cultural and natural, tangible and intangible, and this quality of independence is an important protective attribute for members and staff working in troubled environments, especially those assisting in ICOM's work of documenting the illicit trade in natural and cultural goods. It is also an essential quality in the mediation process offered by ICOM in cases of contested heritage and it is in itself an important ethical stance.

Integrity ICOM conducts its business in accordance with its Code of Ethics, its most influential and lasting contribution to museum professionalism. It requires museums and museum professionals to adopt it into their practice if they are or wish to become members of ICOM. The Code is kept under constant review.

Professionalism Through its National and International Committees, its Code of Ethics, through professional development, publications, annual conferences, and other projects of International Committees and the work of National Committees especially in countries where there is no national museum association, and through alliances with similar organisations, ICOM supports museum professionalism in all its aspects and recognises the growing practical scope of that professionalism. One of ICOM's collaborations involves taking a leadership role as mentioned in the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* from 2015.

ICOM visual identity

To celebrate its 70th anniversary, ICOM unveiled its new visual identity on 4 July 2016. This two-year project was driven by the ICOM Executive Board and the Secretariat, in collaboration with colleagues from the ICOM network.

Why did we rebrand ICOM?

The rebranding project started in 2014. A first phase was completed through a large audit encompassing interviews, workshops and an historical study on the ICOM brand and its evolution. This study gave us an overview of ICOM's identity, missions, actions and their evolution over time.

The positioning of ICOM as a global network for museum professionals laid the foundations of the rebranding of its visual identity.

The graphic chart designed establishes a strong brand architecture gathering all the existing or future units of the organisation: National Committees, International Committees, programmes, partners, etc.

ICOM's new visual identity accompanies the increased scale of ICOM, whose membership has risen substantially.

The adjustment of ICOM's visual expression also forecasts the organisation's future developments.

The chart is made to be inclusive, in order to think ahead to the creation of new committees and the implementation of new projects for museums and museum professionals.

ICOM identity

The logo is just the tip of the iceberg. Before working on the visual expression of ICOM, we needed to define how ICOM and ICOM's units (its National and International Committees, for instance) wanted to be perceived and what the message they wish to bear tomorrow is. All of the design features were then combined

to reinforce this message, with secondary ideas and themes.

What is ICOM ? The only key player which gathers the global museum community and a point of reference for museum professionals. What does ICOM do? It helps museums to be GREAT.

How does ICOM achieve this? By working with museum professionals to face their current and future issues.

ICOM singularities

The brand architecture was built according to the imperatives of ICOM:

- The international vocation of ICOM
ICOM represents museum professionals from all over the world. The new visual identity must comply with this international vocation. Bearing this parameter in mind, the new visual identity must be universal. The storytelling, promise and values carried by the logotype must be understood by everybody, anywhere in the world. On the other hand, this parameter implies the respect of the interests and sensibilities of every nationality and culture. Colours, forms, words, etc., have to be chosen with regard to this requirement.

- Easy handling and reproduction
ICOM representatives are mainly volunteers. The use of the visual identity should not be perceived as a constraint for them. Thus, the new visual identity must be easily comprehensible and usable. The font, colour range and image size should be conceived according to these criteria. Members must be able to use and modify it easily, regardless of their technical skills, with basic computer hardware.

- A dynamic network

The ICOM brand is not carved in stone.

The number of committees and members increases year after year. Almost every year, certain projects, publications or programs come to an end, and new ones are created.

As a consequence, the ICOM brand architecture is in perpetual change. The new identity must fit the units of the already-existing brand architecture, as well as the units to be created.

- Three official languages and local languages
The three official languages, as stated in the ICOM Statutes, are English, French and Spanish. The main ICOM logo must exist in all of those languages. ICOM committees also often use their own national or local language. The new identity has to fit all the languages that are part of the ICOM network, even those which use non-Latin alphabets.

The result

The graphic studio *c-album* won an international competition held between September and December 2015.

ICOM's new identity of ICOM does not represent a break but rather an evolution based on continuity. The approach was to look for a graphic element that would be a synthesis of ICOM's values as stated in the new ICOM Strategic Plan. This symbol has to be global and broadly understood, and has to fit all of the cultures and beliefs which shape the ICOM network. To reach this ambitious goal, simplicity is the greatest asset. We focused our research on the most meaningful term of the ICOM acronym: museums.

When translated in all the languages of the ICOM network, the word highlights a common root that we used as a foundation for the new ICOM visual identity: an M-shaped pattern.

Monogram's design



ICOM international
council
of museums

Main logo design
Proportions, typography and minimum size

